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SUBJECT: UN: FIFTH COMMITTEE AGREES TO FINANCING FOR  
PEACEBUILDING SUPPORT OFFICE

REF: SECSTATE 53612

¶1. Summary. Following weeks of discussion and deliberation, the Fifth Committee broke its deadlock on the funding and staffing modalities of the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) and agreed on April 5 to a short resolution to provide the financing to operationalize the office which, in sum, succeeds in obtaining a better outcome than was authorized in refTel. The resolution provides for \$1,571,300 for post and non-post requirements to be utilized from the provision for Special Political Missions (SPM) 2006-2007, and requests that the SG ensure the efficient use of these resources taking into account the provisions of paragraph 23 of resolution 60/180 (in which the GA mandated the office to be established from within existing resources). It also decides to revert to the issues regarding level, staffing and functions of the PBSO in the context of the 2008-09 budget, leaving the staffing modalities undefined in the current biennium. End summary.

¶2. For weeks, the Fifth Committee was divided over how to proceed on the establishment of the PBSO. USdel took a firm position, calling for resources taken from the SPM account to be offset and for establishment of the head of the office at the D-2 level. On the other side was the G-77, which called for a new appropriation, establishment of an ASG-level post and conditionalities on the recruitment and term of office the head of the PBSO (geographic rotation, 5 year nonrenewable term limit, and preference to be given to candidates from developing countries). The EU, CANZ and Japan held the middle ground in calling for an ASG-level post (without conditions) and resources to be used from SPMs (but without requiring offsets).

¶3. In the final days, the US position evolved to support of an ASG-level post in exchange for language highlighting the mandate that the office was to be established from within existing resources. This shift in position enabled a strong block to be formed by the US, EU, Japan and CANZ in opposition to the G-77 demands for a new appropriation and preferential treatment for candidates from developing countries.

¶4. In an interesting twist of events, it became increasingly apparent that the G-77 was not unified in its support of an ASG-level post. As the US position evolved and the discussions moved toward consensus on this element, the Egyptian delegate began to block progress through any means possible. For instance, when it became clear that the US would not oppose the creation of an ASG post, Egypt -- knowing that the US would never agree to a new appropriation -- insisted that the post must be funded through a new appropriation. When the Secretariat and USdel clarified that it was entirely possible to fund the ASG post using existing resources from the SPM account, Egypt found other ways to stall the discussion. Later, when the EU attempted to broker an agreement on the "human resources" elements (such as geographic rotation and 5-year limit), Egypt immediately

blocked by reintroducing three policy paragraphs that were unacceptable to the EU (and had previously been redrafted by the Committee to enable a consensus position).

15. Following days of this continued deadlock, the G77 took the initiative of drafting a short 7-paragraph resolution to enable the release of resources for the establishment of the PBSO. The authorization provided for up to \$1,571,300 from the approved initial provision of SPMs for 2006-07, with additional language requesting the SG "to ensure the efficient use of resources approved in the provision for special political missions for the biennium 2006-07 taking into account the provisions of paragraph 23 of its resolution 60/180." Interestingly, the amount of \$1.57 million was the amount proposed by ACABQ for post requirements, however, the resolution authorized this amount for post and non-post requirements for the biennium (in effect, reducing the provision by \$1,234,100 from what the SG requested). The resolution also omitted any reference to the human resources elements but called for the GA to revert to the issues of level, staffing and functions of the PBSO in the context of its consideration of the proposed programme budget for 2008-09.

16. Begin text of the resolution:

The General Assembly,

Having considered the reports of the Secretary-General and of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General;

Takes note of the report of the ACABQ;

Decides to authorize the Secretary-General to utilize an amount of up to US \$1,571,300 from the approved initial provision for Special Political Missions under Section 3, Political Affairs, of the Programme Budget for the biennium 2006-07 to operationalize a peacebuilding support office;

Stresses that the authorization from the provision for Special Political Missions referred to in paragraph 3 above is a provisional and exceptional measure, and decides that the PBSO shall be financed from the programme budget and requests the Secretary-General to include provisions for the PBSO in the appropriate section of the programme budget commencing from the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-09 to ensure sustainable and reliable long-term financing of the Office;

Decides to revert to the issues regarding level, staffing and functions of the Peacebuilding Support Office as contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/60/694) in the context of its consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-09 and in the light of decisions, if any, that may result from the consideration by the General Assembly of the report of the Secretary-General to be submitted in accordance with paragraph 25 of its resolution 60/180;

Requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the PBSO has the necessary gender competence to support the PBC in implementing its mandate to integrate a gender perspective into all of its work taking into account, inter alia, Security Council resolution 1325, and drawing on the appropriate expertise in the United Nations system;

Requests the Secretary-General to ensure the efficient use of the resources approved in the provision for Special Political Missions for the biennium 2006-07 taking into account the provisions of paragraph 23 of its resolution 60/180.

17. End text.

